

# Accountability System

## TOPICS INCLUDE:

- Results Reports
- Impact of School Counseling Program Over Time
- Professional School Counselor Performance Standards
- Idaho Counseling Program Performance Review

Accountability and evaluation of the school counseling program are essential. Professional school counselors and the school counseling program must answer the question, “How are students different as a result of the school counseling program?” Professional school counselors demonstrate the effectiveness of their programs in measurable terms. Professional school counselors collect and use data that support and link the school counseling programs to students’ academic success.

## Results Reports

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Results reports ensure programs are carried out, analyzed for effectiveness and changed and further improved as needed. The student results data are collected for activities outlined in the action plans. The goal is to show change in student behavior and student learning. Sharing these results with stakeholders serves to advocate for students and the program. The school counseling program supports every student’s academic achievement. It seeks to assist every student in the mastery of competencies designed to foster academic and professional-technical, life and career, and personal and social development. In addition, the program, through the advocacy and leadership of professional school counselors, discovers and facilitates the removal of barriers to learning for all students.

Data collection provides the school counseling and guidance program with the information needed to evaluate the program as it relates to students’ progress. It is important to show how students are different as a result of the program, lesson, and activity. Data collection occurs both before and after the school counseling and guidance activity. The data indicate what worked and what didn’t, and clarify what needs to be changed or improved.

Programs can be scrutinized for effectiveness during the implementation process. Data are collected at three different intervals. Immediate data provide a short-term evaluation of the activity process on student behavior or student learning. Intermediate data collection occurs over a longer period of time as a benchmark or indication of progress toward the goal.

Long-term data collection occurs over an extended period of time and measures the activity's overall results for students. Long-term data collection requires implementation of effective short-term and intermediate data collection projects.

Collecting and analyzing results is key to assessing program effectiveness after the activity is completed; we must be able to know where students are as a result (Myrick, 2003). These results can be powerful advocacy tools when promoting the school counseling program.

The results report serves as a tool for:

- Ensuring the program was carried out as planned.
- Ensuring every student was served.
- Ensuring developmentally appropriate materials were used.
- Documenting the program's process, perception and results data.
- Documenting the program's immediate, intermediate and long-range impact.
- Analyzing the program effectiveness.
- Sharing the program's successes.

- Improving the program.
- Advocating for systemic change in the school system.

The results reports for school guidance curriculum may include the following:

- The grade level served
- Lesson content areas
- Curriculum or materials used
- Process data such as the number of school counseling and guidance lessons delivered and in what subject area
- Process data such as the number of students served
- Immediate perception data such as pre- and post-tests of knowledge gained
- Intermediate and long-term results data such as the impact on behavior, attendance, or achievement.
- The implications of the results for the school counseling and guidance program.

See [Appendix pp. 146 & 149](#) for curriculum and achievement results report templates.

## Impact of the School Counseling Program Over Time

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The overall view of student progress is captured through demographics, graduation rates, postsecondary education and training data, discipline and attendance data, test scores and other standardized sources of statistical information. Comparing data over time offers long-term information reflecting trends in student improvement or areas of concern (Johnson & Johnson, 2001).

The impact over time form, also known as the Results Report (depicted in the [Appendix pp. 146 & 149](#)) serves as a summary sheet listing baseline and change data over time. This allows a review of data trends in student development for all domain areas: academic and professional-technical, life and career, and personal and social. It gives the counseling staff a tool to review overall student progress and provides a review of the comprehensive

program for the school site or district. Using the school-wide results report gives professional school counselors and administrators the big picture and serves as a catalyst for systemic change.

Although professional school counselors may see immediate results in attendance, behavior and academic achievement, school-wide systemic change requires data that tell the larger story and present an overall, school-wide evaluation of student progress. Community demographics can change, and this will be reflected in the student population. As student populations change, results will change. Tracking this information over time helps sites evaluate and alter programs based upon local need.

The school may already have a school report card full of valuable information. This

is an excellent beginning source for reporting the site's academic and professional-technical, life and career, and personal and social development and progress over time. The reported information depends on school or school district priorities and may include such information as:

- Demographic data.
- Attendance data.
- Suspension and expulsion rates.
- Behavioral referrals.
- Promotion and retention rates.
- Graduation rates.
- Standardized testing results.

Documenting baseline data prior to programmatic restructuring provides necessary information for data-based decision making. Each year data are charted indicating growth or change in the areas of concern. The data are analyzed in relation to progress made toward the school-wide mission and achievement goals. Accountability charts are easy to read and easy to use to convey what has changed over time (see [Appendix, pp. 145, 148, and 158-161](#) for accountability reporting templates). Noticing trends over time invites reflection, discussion and participation by all stakeholders in assessing the program for continual program evaluation and improvement.

The Results Report: Impact Over Time form minimally contains the following:

- Student demographics: Enrollment data, gender, ethnicity, grade levels and languages.
- Academic and professional-technical development: Standardized test scores, grade-point averages, dropout rates, graduation rates.
- Life and career development: Students enrolled in work experience, job shadowing.
- Personal/social development: Climate survey results, substance use and abuse statistics, attendance data and suspension and expulsion data.
- Parent or guardian involvement: Parent or guardian attendance at evening activities, parent workshops and conferences.

The information in the Results Report: Impact Over Time school profile is extremely valuable for all school counseling personnel. Collecting this data at any beginning point creates a baseline from which to measure program results. Yearly updates assess both program progress and impact. The information reveals areas of strength and weakness and growth or loss in overall program success. It is also a convenient tool for sharing systemic change, programmatic successes and needs.

## Professional School Counselor Performance Standards

The professional school counselor performance standards presented here align with the *ASCA National Model*<sup>®</sup> and contain basic standards of practice expected from professional school counselors. While individual districts in Idaho may have their own performance measures, the ASCA standards are provided here for districts or schools

seeking model professional school counselor performance standards. Personnel delivering the school counseling program are evaluated in the areas of program implementation, program evaluation and professionalism. All too often, professional school counselors are evaluated using an instrument designed for teachers or resource professionals. These professional school counselor standards

accurately reflect the unique training of professional school counselors and their responsibilities within the school system.

Although used for performance evaluation, the standards are also an important tool in the professional school counselor's own self-evaluation and will help focus personal and professional development plans. It is suggested that professional school counselors and administrators work within their individual systems to design appropriate evaluation and/or appraisal tools that meet their district governing board and bargaining unit policies. It is recommended that administrators evaluate professional school counselors every year. An evaluation should include individual comments as well as a rating system for how well the professional school counselor is meeting required performance standards.

Professional school counselor standards are (Also in [Appendix pp. 160-163](#)):

- Standard 1: Program organization
- Standard 2: School counseling and guidance curriculum delivered to all students
- Standard 3: Individual student planning
- Standard 4: Responsive services
- Standard 5: Program support
- Standard 6: Professional school counselor and administrator agreement
- Standard 7: Advisory council
- Standard 8: Use of data
- Standard 9: Student monitoring
- Standard 10: Use of time and calendar
- Standard 11: Results evaluation
- Standard 12: Program audit
- Standard 13: Infusing themes

### **Standard 1: The professional school counselor plans, organizes and delivers the school counseling program.**

- 1.1 A program is designed to meet the needs of the school.
- 1.2 The professional school counselor demonstrates positive interpersonal relationships with students.

- 1.3 The professional school counselor demonstrates positive interpersonal relationships with educational staff.
- 1.4 The professional school counselor demonstrates positive interpersonal relationships with parents or guardians.

### **Standard 2: The professional school counselor implements the school guidance curriculum through the use of effective instructional skills and careful planning of structured group sessions for all students.**

- 2.1 The professional school counselor, in collaboration with parents or guardians, helps students establish goals and develop and use planning skills.
- 2.2 The professional school counselor develops materials and instructional strategies to meet student needs and school goals.
- 2.3 The professional school counselor encourages staff involvement to ensure the effective implementation of the school guidance curriculum.

### **Standard 3: The professional school counselor implements the individual planning component by guiding individuals and groups of students and their parents or guardians through the development of educational and career paths, using the Individual Graduation Plan process.**

- 3.1 The professional school counselor, in collaboration with parents or guardians, helps students establish goals and develop and use planning skills.
- 3.2 The professional school counselor demonstrates accurate and appropriate interpretation of assessment data and the presentation of relevant, unbiased information.
- 3.3 The professional school counselor aids students and parents or guardians with effective Individual Graduation Plan processes.

**Standard 4: The professional school counselor provides responsive services through the effective use of individual and small-group counseling, consultation and referral skills.**

- 1.1 The professional school counselor counsels individual students and small groups of students with identified needs and concerns.
- 1.2 The professional school counselor consults effectively with parents or guardians, teachers, administrators and other relevant individuals.
- 1.3 The professional school counselor implements an effective referral process with administrators, teachers, and other school personnel.

**Standard 5: The professional school counselor provides system support through effective school counseling program management and support for other educational programs.**

- 5.1 The professional school counselor provides a comprehensive and balanced school counseling program in collaboration with school staff.
- 5.2 The professional school counselor provides support for other school programs.

**Standard 6: The professional school counselor discusses the counseling department management system and the program action plans with the school administrator.**

- 6.1 The professional school counselor discusses the qualities of the professional school counselor management system with the other members of the counseling staff and has agreement.
- 6.2 The professional school counselor discusses the program results anticipated when implementing the action plans for the school year.

**Standard 7: The professional school counselor is responsible for establishing**

**and convening an advisory council for the school counseling program.**

- 1.1 The professional school counselor meets with the advisory council.
- 1.2 The professional school counselor reviews the school counseling program onsite review process with the council.
- 1.3 The professional school counselor records meeting information.

**Standard 8: The professional school counselor collects and analyzes data to guide program direction and emphasis.**

- 8.1 The professional school counselor uses school data to make decisions regarding student choice of classes and special programs.
- 8.2 The professional school counselor uses data from the counseling program to make decisions regarding program revisions.
- 8.3 The professional school counselor analyzes data to ensure every student has equity and access to a rigorous academic curriculum.
- 8.4 The professional school counselor understands and uses data to establish goals and activities to close the achievement gap.

**Standard 9: The professional school counselor monitors the students on a regular basis as they progress in school.**

- 9.1 The professional school counselor is accountable for monitoring every student's progress.
- 9.2 The professional school counselor implements monitoring systems appropriate to the individual school.
- 9.3 The professional school counselor develops appropriate interventions for students as needed and monitors their progress.

**Standard 10: The professional school counselor uses time and calendars to implement an efficient program.**

- 10.1 The professional school counselor uses a master calendar to plan activities throughout the year.



- 10.2 The professional school counselor distributes the master calendar to parents or guardians, staff and students.
- 10.3 The professional school counselor posts a weekly or monthly calendar.
- 10.4 The professional school counselor analyzes time spent providing direct service to students.

### **Standard 11: The professional school counselor develops a results evaluation for the program.**

- 11.1 The professional school counselor measures results attained from school guidance curriculum and closing the achievement gap activities.
- 11.2 The professional school counselor works with members of the counseling team and with the principal to clarify how programs are evaluated and how results are shared.
- 11.3 The professional school counselor knows how to collect process, perception and results data.

### **Standard 12: The professional school counselor conducts a yearly program self-evaluation.**

- 12.1 The professional school counselor completes a program self-evaluation to determine the degrees to which the school counseling program is being implemented.
- 12.2 The professional school counselor shares the results of the program self-evaluation with the advisory council.

- 12.3 The professional school counselor uses the yearly self-evaluation to make changes in the school counseling program and calendar for the following year.

### **Standard 13: The professional school counselor is a student advocate, leader, and collaborator.**

- 13.1 The professional school counselor promotes academic success of every student.
- 13.2 The professional school counselor promotes equity and access for every student.
- 13.3 The professional school counselor takes a leadership role within the counseling department, the school setting and the community.
- 13.4 The professional school counselor understands reform issues and works to close the achievement gap.
- 13.5 The professional school counselor collaborates with teachers, parents and the community to promote academic success of students.
- 13.6 The professional school counselor builds effective teams by encouraging collaboration among all school staff.
- 13.7 The professional school counselor uses data to recommend systemic change in policy and procedures that limit or inhibit academic achievement.

## **Professional School Counselor Ethical Standards**

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The Idaho School Counselor Association (ISCA) and American School Counselor Association (ASCA) are professional organizations whose members are certified and/or licensed in professional school counseling with unique qualifications and skills to address the academic/professional-technical, personal and social, and life and career development needs of all students.

Professional school counselors are advocates, leaders, collaborators and consultants who create opportunities for equity in access and success in educational opportunities by connecting their programs to the mission of schools and subscribing to the following tenets of professional responsibility (Also in [Appendix pp. 164-172](#)):

- Each person has the right to be respected, be treated with dignity and have access to a comprehensive school counseling program that advocates for and affirms all students from diverse populations regardless of ethnic/racial status, age, economic status, special needs, English as a second language or other language group, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity/expression, family type, religious/spiritual identity and appearance.
- Each person has the right to receive the information and support needed to move toward self-direction and self-development and affirmation within one's group identities, with special care being given to students who have historically not received adequate educational services: students of color, low socio-economic students, students with disabilities and students with nondominant language backgrounds.
- Each person has the right to understand the full magnitude and meaning of his/her educational choices and how those choices will affect future opportunities.
- Each person has the right to privacy and thereby the right to expect the professional school counselor-student relationship to comply with all laws, policies and ethical standards pertaining to confidentiality in the school setting.

In *Ethical Standards for School Counselors*, ASCA specifies the principles of ethical behavior necessary to maintain the high standards of integrity, leadership and professionalism among its members. The *Ethical Standards for School Counselors* were developed to clarify the nature of ethical responsibilities held in common by school counseling professionals. The purposes of this document are to:

- Serve as a guide for the ethical practices of all professional school counselors regardless of level, area, population served or membership in this professional association;
- Provide self-appraisal and peer evaluations regarding professional school counselor responsibilities to students, parents/guardians, colleagues and professional associates, schools, communities and the counseling profession; and
- Inform those served by the professional school counselor of acceptable practices and expected professional behavior.

The *Ethical Standards* document can be found in the [Appendix, pp.164-172](#).

Idaho's Professional Standards Commission Code of Ethics for Educators can be found in the [Appendix, pp. 173-174](#).

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## The School Counseling Program Performance Review

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A comprehensive school counseling program is multifaceted and designed with continuous evaluation and modification in mind. Annual self-evaluations and regular on-site review of the school counseling program serves to set the standards for the school counseling program.

Currently, on-site program reviews are conducted through the Division of Professional-Technical Education. The program review seeks to provide evidence of the program's alignment with the *Idaho School Counseling Model*. The primary purpose for collecting this information is to guide future actions within the program and

to improve future results for students. The review aligns with and, over time, will include all program components for the *Idaho School Counseling Model*. Professional school counselors evaluate each criterion as described in each performance standard. Ideally, the self-evaluation is conducted annually in the spring. After completing the self-evaluation, analyze responses to determine the following:

- Major strengths of the program
- Items in great need of strengthening
- Short-range goals for improvement

- Long-range goals for improvement

As professional school counselors begin to revise their program and work toward completing and implementing the specific criteria, they may choose to either present each section to administration for acceptance as completed or complete the entire program before presenting it for acceptance in its entirety. This decision is made locally. Regardless of approach, the program results should be shared with the advisory council. The results should drive the program goals, training, and behavior for the following year.

## Student Services Personnel Accountability Report Card (S.S.P.A.R.C.)

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The **Student Services Personnel Accountability Report Card (S.S.P.A.R.C.)** is a continuous improvement tool that gives a school site an opportunity to demonstrate effective communication and a commitment to getting results. Modeled after the School Accountability Report Card (SARC), the SPARC was developed in 2000 by an advisory group of Los Angeles County counselors, counselor supervisors, counselor educators, and California Department of Education consultants.

We hope that you will find the S.S.P.A.R.C. useful in:

- presenting a self-evaluation of your student support system
- promoting your program proactively

to your school administration, school board, parents/guardians, and community partners and businesses

- preparing reports for school accreditation, grants, or awards recognition
- implementing the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Standards and the National Model for School Counseling Programs

A template for your use is included in the [Appendix pp. 158-159](#). Please feel free to adapt the S.S.P.A.R.C. to your school counseling and student support programs' needs.